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INGECOPO,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

INGECOPO.

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY TUDOR WILLIAMS

BROOKLYN :

TREMLET & CO., PRINTERS, 326-330 FULTON STREET

1879.

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PRELUDE.

While winds go crooning o'er the lea,

While brooks meander murmuringly,

While warblers pipe in air and tree,

Let not my poor voice silent be,

I, too, must sing.

Sing from the fullness of my heart,

Sing though I break the forms of art ;

Whatever love and joy impart,

Or e'en the troubled bosom's smart,

That let me sing.

Though mine be no Æolian strain,

Though brooks with sweeter voice complain,

Though warblers shame my rude refrain,

Though naught but slights my song obtain,

Yet will I sing.



INGECOPO

A Legend of Lake Austin.

Ingecopo, last of red men,
Steals beside his native lake,
Of the forests and the mountains
Final, fond farewell to take.

Ingecopo, sole survivor
Of the tribe of Powhican : —
They fell victims of the pale-face,
He alone lives — under ban.

Once their numbers, like the leaflets
Of the forest, filled the land,
But they dwindled fast and surely
’Neath the harsh invader’s hand.

Thus he only, scorned and hated,
 Roams his people's lost domain,
Hunted by the vengeful white man
 Till he also shall be slain.

Stealthily as a fox that ventures
 From his covert to the moor,
Ingecopo leaves his hiding,
 Indian old and sad and poor ;

Gazes on the glorious kingdom,
 Once his nation's since the sun
First rose in the East and ever
 Since the wayward rills had run ;

Gloats, with all the fierce affection
 Of a warrior for his bride,
On the goodly land, and feels him
 Swell and glow with ancient pride ;

Deems himself once more a chieftain
Of a tried and warlike race,
Leader, not dethroned nor exiled,
Ruling with a kingly grace.

Fair is that uncultured landscape :
With its mighty hills that smite
Like javelins the heaven's bosom
Where the clouds are floating white :

Draperied in densest forests
That forever flourish green,
All their sombre vistas murmuring
From the streams that rush between :

Trackless woods, where strays the panther,
Where survive the bear and deer,
Where the whooping of the Indian
Once resounded glad and clear.

Glassy lies the limpid lakelet,
Stirless in the summer noon ;
Idle zephyrs all are sleeping
That make gentle ripples croon.

In the blue the eagle circles
Lazily without a scream ;
Snowy swans far off are floating
Like the vision of a dream.

Paradise of Ingecoco !
Ruthless the despoiling fate
Which stands forth with flaming menace,
A grim angel at the gate.

Nevermore will he dare claim it—
Eden once that fruitful gave
Every sweet barbarian bounty,
Now can proffer but a grave.

Gone are all the noble masters
Who this realm of beauty kept,
Scores of moons have shone and faded
Since within the mold they slept.

Outlawed, lonely Ingecoco
Joys and glories past lives o'er,
Sitting like a dismal spectre
On the lakelet's rocky shore.

Then the tall trees hear him moaning :
Soft their branches whisper woe ;
And the waters seem to answer
With a murmur hoarse and low.

In mid-heaven the eagle flutters,
Screams as if before the blast,
While the swimming swans in terror
Foaming waves behind them cast.

Buried in his tattered mantle,
 Bending low his aged head,
Ingecoco, deeply mourning,
 Seems a statue stiff and dead.

Passive as the rocks beneath him,
 In his stern old soul he grieves
With the quenchless, choking sorrow
 Which no wail nor tear relieves.

To no sound he seems to hearken,
 Care of danger shows he none,
But he wraps his face in darkness,
 Nature's sore-despairing son.

On the boughs the curious squirrels
 And the birds gaze on his form ;
And the restless little fishes
 Nigh the shore's edge wondering swarm.

Vainly freshened winds and wavelets

Strive his stolid soul to rouse ;

Till the orb of day is setting

Ingecopo mourns and bows :

Till above the western summits

The spent flame of daylight burns

Like a candle's dying flicker,

Brightening as the earth it turns

To a globe of mellow splendor,

While the forests, tipped with fire,

Gloomier grows within their arches,

Like cathedrals when expire

All the dazzling rows of tapers

Set before a worshipped shrine ;

And the hills throw lengthening shadows

O'er the waters dark as wine.

Ingecopo, wilt thou heed not !

Look without thy blanket's folds !

For a phantom bark approaches

Which a hostile pale-face holds.

Will thy deaf ears never listen

To the paddle's plashing blade ?

Dost thou now not hear the ripples

By the keel's impulsions made ?

Swiftly o'er the twilight surface

Glides the hunter's light canoe ;

Flee, O flee, old Ingecopo,

Else this hour thy soul shall rue.

Slowly, like one rudely startled

From deep sleep's benumbing hold,

Ingecopo's dull orbs open,

Threatened peril to behold.

All too late, for on the gravel

Grates the boat, the foe leaps out ;

Ere the chieftain has bestirred him

Rings the white man's angry shout :

“Ha, thou cunning, wrinkled red-skin,

Has Will Wildwood found thee here ?

Now by all the scalps of white men

Thou hast filched, 'twill cost thee dear.

“I will grant thee but an instant

For appeal to Manitou :

This is Christian, not thy merit,—

Thou who did'st thy hands imbrue

“Oft in blood of men and women,

Sons and daughters white of hue ;

Whom thy tribe assailed, remorseless,

And the shrinking creatures slew

“Without space to breathe a prayer,—
Butchering them, as wolves do prey
On the lambkins in the sheep fold,
When the shepherd’s far away.

“Chant thee, savage, chant thy death-song,
For thine hour is surely come.”
But the chieftan stands before him
Tall, majestic and dumb ;

With a dignity imperial,
As of one born to command,
Steadfast eyes that gaze unflinching,
And a mien composed and grand.

Then the fierce impulsive hunter,
Before one he erst would name
“Vermin” and “debased barbarian”
Droops his glance in awe and shame.

Keenly stricken in his conscience,
Grows his restive fury tame ;
Harmless drops the fatal hammer,
Swerves the loaded barrel's aim.

Could one shoot his own old father ?
Could he slay a fallen king ?
This grim chief, thus lone and stately,
Surely is no soulless thing.

For a moment stand they silent,
Like two figures wrought of stone ;
Then the chieftain finding utterance
Speaks in harsh and lofty tone.

“ Ugh, thou babe that wields a firearm,
Dost thou fear to hear its noise ?
I am but an unarmed red-man
To be overcome by boys.

“I am in my middle dotage,
My limbs totter, I am frail;
Before this old withered chieftain
Weaponed warrior need not quail.

“Hasten then, thou tool of vengeance,
Swift thy slaughtering piece explode;
What, and dost thou shrink from murder
When defiance I’ve bestowed?

“’Tis most true, they were intruders
On my lands whom I have slain;
Does the white man think of justice
When revenge alone he’d gain?

“Strike me down; why be a woman,
Weak, inert and mercy-filled;
Only spare mine age the torture
And my blood were better spilled.

“Aye, I pray thee, speed thy purpose :

Kill the Indian chief forlorn,

Who but wishes death may hurry,

Who laments thy laggard scorn.

“Haste, I have no squaw to mourn me,

Nor a daughter to deplore,

Nor a son that might avenge me,

Nor one brave of all of yore.

“I am useless ; what perverseness

’Twere for this half-rotted tree

To claim favor of the woodsman ;

Let the axe hew swift at me.

“Wherefore standest thou thus halting ?

Time is wasted ; yonder see,

Night is seated on the mountains ;

Let my night fall gloomily.”

Grandly thus speaks Ingecoco,

And the speech his foeman stings ;
Pained and penitent, Will Wildwood
On the sward his weapon flings :

And he cries, "O chief, I've sought thee
Night and day for many a moon,
And I've vowed that I would smite thee
Nor allow a moment's boon.

"For thy tribe did work me damage
Such as never man forgets ;
Still the blood of sire and mother
The stained forest-carpet wets.

"But I now undo my vowing,
Now I bid thee go as free
As the eagle in the clondland,
And o'erlook thy wrongs to me.

“Sagamore, thy noble nature

I admire ; henceforth shall end
All our strife and evil feeling,
And I'll seek thee to befriend.

“Shall I dare to quench, revengeful,

This old life that heaven has spared
Through all wars and feuds and troubles,
When all died who with thee shared ?

“Nay, high heaven I know forbids it,

And its mandates I'll obey,
Be they written on book's pages
Or enstamped on heart of clay.

“Chieftain, form we here a treaty ;

Thou from bitterness shalt cease ;
I will through the land proclaim thee
One with all men now at peace.

“So on thy declining footsteps
Shall no hound of rage pursue ;
Thou shalt bide disputeless monarch,
Though thy subjects be but few.

“Deemest thou the mighty spirit
Loves these heated strifes of men ?
Will he welcome thee the sooner
That thine old age could not pen

“Violence within thy bosom ?
Nay, bethink thee, henceforth dwell
Peacefully, and when thou diest
Manitou shall praise thee well.”

Heaves the chieftain's rugged bosom,
And his stoic firmness yields,
E'en like ice when winds of spring-time
Breathe upon the frozen fields.

And adown his bronzed visage
• Fall the tears, as does the rain
When a sudden cloud sweeps over
Drenching all the dusty plain.

And he utters through the passion
Which an instant chokes his voice
His assent in broken accents
And of amity makes choice.

And he swears by yon Great Spirit,
Ruler of the earth and air,
That the white man is his kinsman,
Born and sealed unto him there.

Manitou who made the heavens,
Manitou who made them both,
Hears their friendly protestations,
Pours a blessing on their oath.

Then speaks Ingecoco: "White man,
When our wigwams filled the wood
They scarce left these boles a circle
To expand, so close they stood.

"But the chieftain's state departed
Fore fire fluid and fire-arm;
Now he hides him in a cavern,
Like the beasts whom men alarm.

"But I'll still invite my brother
To the red-man's frugal feast,
And my couch of skins, my brother,
Shall be thine till flames the East.

"Be it so, my Indian father,"
Wildwood answers full of glee.
"Nor could all the wide world offer
Truer hospitality."

Saying so his vessel birchen

High he bears upon the strand ;

Follows then old Ingecopo,

With a spirit pleased and bland.

In recesses of the mountain,

Where the boulders wildy strewn

Are with thickets dense of hemlock

And repellent briers o'ergrown,

Ingecopo has his dwelling,

Like a panther's secret lair ;

Scarce the keenest-eyed backwoodsman

E'er could trace him hidden there.

There they feast like loyal comrades,

Smoke the peaceful bowl of stone,

Slumber night-long void of hatred

Till the gloomy shades have flown.

Brotherly at morn their parting—

One to seek the haunts of men
To relate his curious story ;

One to hover nigh his den

Till such time as fate shall kindly

Clip life's weak, abraded thread,
And the name of Ingecoco
Shall be numbered with the dead.

But there troubles not the chieftain

Any man from this time on ;
Safe he dwells unquestioned sovereign,
Though his barbarous pomp is gone.

For Will Wildwood is his champion

Henceforth and he loudly swears
Vengeance on whoe'er disturbs him,
So each bloody foe forbears.

And the settlers multiplying,
Like the sands beside the sea,
Hold the sachem in their pity
And aye treat him reverently.

Thus he bides in lonesome honor
Till his regal frame is bent,
Like the bow he scarce can handle
Since his manly strength is spent.

Till his hair that once flowed darkly
Down his shoulders turns as white
As the swan's unspotted plumage,
And his orbs have lost their sight.

Weak, decrepit, ever yearning
For an arm of strength to trust,
Praying to the Mighty Spirit
To uplift him from the dust,

Dies at last old Ingecopo,
Yet not ere he learns the truth,
Knows of heaven and a deliverer,
And repents him of his youth.

Dies, and all the people mourn him
As if they had lost a sage,
Or their own acknowledged ruler
Who had ne'er provoked their rage.

In the dimness of his grotto
Take his bones their final rest,
Walled from man's and beast's intrusion.
While his soul is truly blest.

In the summerland of heaven,
Mingling with his race and kin,
Ingecopo dwells full happy,
Freed from war and woe and sin.

Ye who seek the shores of Austin,
Standing by its crystal wave,
'Neath the over-arching hemlocks,
Pay a tribute at his grave.

Shed not drops of empty sorrow,
Waste no sighs upon the air,
But, with spirit shamed, remember
His slain people's fatal snare.

And then render to the Indian
Meed of justice due a man
Who fought bravely for his birthright
While his vital currents ran.

Sturdy Indian ! truly patriot,
 Though as tiger wild and fierce ;
Barbarous, savage and untutored,
 Mercy scarce his soul could pierce ;

Yet unto the latest ages
 Shall his manful battle ring,
Shaming craven heirs of freedom
 Feebly to their rights that cling.

LORD RONALD'S FATE.

“What is it ails my lady?” the serving maiden
cried,

And gazed with awe and anguish on the sorely
weeping bride;—

Her robe was in disorder, her bridal wreath was
torn;—

“Decked bravely for her wedding why should
my lady mourn?

“Is not your lover noble and brave and kind and
true?

Why all the maids are pining with envying of
you;

Indeed, my darling lady, if now you moan and
weep,

The halls of peace celestial would be a dungeon
keep.”

“My Ronald sooth is noble and true and brave
and kind,

His equal in all England ye never more shall
find ;

My groom is all I wish him, and yet, misgiving
heart,

There is a woe upon me that will not e'er
depart ;

“For I’ve a dark foreboding of something that
is ill,

And many gloomy fancies my sombre bosom
fill.”

O cheer ye up, my lady, this mood will surely
pass ;

’Tis much the same at weddings with every
tender lass.

“But sooth ’twill all be over as quickly as the
word

Pronouncing you a matron your gladdened ears
have heard ;

“Then, when in all the steeples the joyous chimes
shall ring,
Their peals and Ronald's kisses sure happiness
shall bring.”

But the lady lonely, only sadly shook her head,
Nor by her maiden's soothing would she be
comforted :—

“Alas! a cloud has risen amid the pleasant sky,
The wind is wildly sighing, an evil storm is nigh.”

Out from his castle Ronald has ridden with
his train :—

Such fair pomp of chivalry is ne'er to be again :
Through forest and o'er moorland, to reach his
waiting bride.

He spurs his mettled charger that bounds along
in pride.

“Go not so fast, Lord Ronald, nor leave your
trusty band
Impatient far behind you in such a troubled
land :

For vengeful foes are lurking in coverts by the
way,
And cruel weapons thirsting a noble lord to
slay."

"Fear not, my good lieutenant, the cravens will
not dare
Aught save to scowl at Ronald, like wolves
within their lair:
Have I not scourged them soundly and broke
their bloody pack?
I do defy the vengeance of the curs upon my
track."

The golden sun is setting and through the fo-
liage streams
The weird and mellow radiance of day's depart-
ing beams;
Within the woods the warblers are twittering
good-night,
And 'mid the solemn vistas strange phantoms
meet the sight.

The retinue are awe-struck ; yet, ere they inter-
cede,

Lord Ronald flies before them on his impetuous
steed ;

Into the gloom he enters, as one would pierce
the grave,

And leave the world forever, and as one mad
he drave.

“ Come, cursed laggarts, hasten your lord to
overtake,

Ere sounds of fearful conflict the woodland
quiet wake ;

Ere Ronald in the onset before his foes shall
fall,

And sorrow seize his lady and ruin seize us
all.”

Then through the night they gallop as on a
field of war,

To seek their reckless leader who leaveth them
afar ;

They loudly wind the bugle and raise the
cheery shout,

And from the dangling scabbards their sharp-
ened swords leap out.

Too late, too late their succor, for, in the deep-
ening shade,

Beside a moaning rivulet a stalwart form is
laid ;

'Tis Ronald, and his life-blood commingles with
the flow

Of the dark streamlet's waters gurgling notes
of woe.

Dastard hands had smote him careless and
waylaid ;

Thus with the day his lady's enchanting visions
fade ;

Her heart will break with mourning : too well
did it forbode

That misery was coming along Lord Ronald's
road.

THE RUSTIC MAIDEN.

A merry maiden hastened to a field
Where grew the daisies in a sea of white
That almost drowned the greenness of the grass :
And where the wind bestirred their nodding
heads.

Till all the space was an inland lake
Whose rippling waters green wear crests of
foam.

Straightway she plucked a modest, star-like
flower,

And bent awhile her soft and dreamy gaze
Upon its heart of gold ; and then essayed
With its white rays a divination sweet.
With dainty hand she tore the petals out
And flung them to the ground. 'Twas "yes"
and "no"

Her sweet lips framed to solve the half-felt
doubt

Whether she was beloved. "A lover's vows
I will not trust," she said; "They're often
false;

Thus shall I know if I am truly loved;

Pure blossom fair be thou my oracle."

And so she tried her simple augury,

Till at the last a single petal left

Gave answer plain that filled her heart with
peace;

And thence she went, red-lipped and rosy-
cheeked,

Her pure heart gladdened and her spirit free
Of doubts and strivings; with her faith re-
newed,

And at her feet the murmuring grasses waved.

And all about the loving warblers sang

Such ditties blithe as charmed her rustic soul.

THE DROWNED FISHERMAN.

Pale as the hue of the dead was her face,
And dim as the orbs of the dead her eyes,
Her heart stood still in its chamber a space,
And over her features there froze apace
A look of horror and fierce surprise.

She was as if stone 'neath the cold grey sky,
Her hands clutching hard o'er her heart were
pressed,

As if to repress an unquenchable cry,
That fain would leap out and bear up on high
All the agony wild of her breast.

The sea roared hoarse on the rock-ribbed shore,
And the wind blew sullenly past her,
The sea birds wailed as they winged them o'er
“There’s a bark on the reef that shall sail
no more ;
‘Tis ended, and so is its master.”

The fishermen paused with their lifeless load
Whence the sea-brine dripped on the sands ;
A braver mariner never had rode
The wild-tossed waves, or a deck ever strode,
Than him they bore stiff in their hands.

Silent they stood as a group of clay,
Their rags fluttering loose in the breeze ;
They seemed like murderers bringing their prey
Penitent back and grieved they did slay
The victim their vengeance did seize.

· What is this that ye bring from the waves to
me, —

This moveless and stark and watery thing?

'Tis not he, nay surely, it cannot be

The corpse of my man from the jaws of the sea.

Thus shamefaced and guilty ye bring."

Abashed by the force of her frenzied grief,

Uneasy and speechless they stand ;

Till their leader speaks forth rude words and
brief,

Yet kindly meant for her soul's relief,

As she glowered upon the band,

· We found him, missus, on the waves afloat,

The stalwart sport of the tide,

All wrecked and snuken his faithless boat,

While the billows over his death did gloat,

Like sharks in their hungry pride.

“ Alas, what a loss ”—but he stopped him there.
He had broken her woe’s stony spell ;
A shriek rang forth on the trembling air,
The face of the dead was all blown bare,
And beside it her own face fell.

In vain have they lifted up her form,
Her heart beats not and her breath is still ;
Ah, fatal throe of a wife’s love warm !—
Two souls have joined in the lowering storm,
And their bodies one sepulchre fill.

THE SABBATH CHIMES.

The Sabbath chimes are ringing,
With sweet and solemn peal,
The tunes we twain were singing
In the days when thou wert leal.

Well I recall our courting
On many a Sabbath eve,
When sunset hues disporting
A glory fair did weave.

But gone are now the days of yore,
And gone thy fickle love :
The sunset skies are fair no more,
And chimes a discord prove.

THE CONVICT.

'Tis midnight, and the placid moon
That o'er the heights must vanish soon,
With tender, mystic brilliance shines
O'er mountains dark with rustling pines,
And o'er the valley nestling low,
Where limpid streams like silver show :
And brightly does her mellow fire
Light up each tree and roof and spire
With glittering beauty till they seem
Like carven shapes ; nor e'er could gleam
A Paradise more mild and fair
Than the lit landscape stretching there,
So still and solemn 'neath the skies,
As if the moonlight petrifies,

While o'er its marble splendor lies
The deep, unbroken hush of night
When soothing sleep puts care to flight.
Upon his hard, uneasy couch,
Behold the wakeful prisoner crouch,
Like some wild, fettered beast that strains
Rebellious 'gainst its galling chains.
All sleepless since the set of sun,
He counts his moments one by one,
For life but till the morn shall run.
And then he dies a felon's fate,
A bloody deed to expiate,
To cleanse away the dreadful stain
Of a fellow-mortal rudely slain ;
A victim of the righteous law
That strikes the evil heart with awe.
The network of the iron bars,
Seen 'gainst the moon like dismal scars,
Her bright, unclouded visage mars :

Some broken, straggling rays invade,
But scarcely tint the cell's deep shade :
He hears without the light wind's moan,
The brooklet's gurgling monotone ;
Then, piercing clear the walls of stone,
He hears the distant chapel bell
Tolling the hour, and knows his knell
Ere long the same stern notes shall ring
When in the grave his corpse they fling
With harsh contempt; and then he hears
A sound that wakes a thousand fears ;
Half-muffled by the prison wall,
He lists the workmen's hammers fall
With a dull thud, and yet so plain,
He writhes in agonizing pain.
As step by step the scaffold's built,
Where he must pay the dues of guilt,
Most strange and chilling terrors seize
His sinking heart : his nerveless knees

Beat each 'gainst other as he tries
From off his restless bed to rise,
And totters, trembling, o'er the floor,
While the cold sweat flows from each pore.
Unto the moonlight streaming in
He lifts his visage, haggard, thin,
Wrinkled and seamed ; unkempt his hair,
And in his eyes a madman's glare ;
And as his wretched frame does shake,
A ghastly figure does he make.
So near his ignominious end,
He owns not e'en a single friend ;
No heart shall sorrow when he's dead,
Nor to his narrow, lowly bed
Beneath the sward make pilgrimage
To mourn and weep ; none need assuage
Their grief for him ; he dies at morn ;
His transient name shall live in scorn
Some fleeting days, and then no more

His memory last. It girds him sore
To think how lovelessly the world
Dismisses him to torments hurled ;
And yet the whole wide world he hates.
As shivering now his doom he waits,
His fears o'erwhelm him as a flood,
And as a tiger thirsts for blood,
He thirsts to live. But one more day
And quaking dread might pass away
And leave him brave, his spirit steeled,
More ready unto fate to yield.
But now, abjectly as a worm,
Which 'neath the heavy heel does squirm,
He quivers in his hopeless throes,
Yet would not have his life to close.
Oh, but to live ! at any price !
Even but to live ! It would suffice,
Though weighed with chains, prisoned alone
Within these walls of thickest stone ;

To shun awhile the stifling grave,
He'd live a scorned and beaten slave :
Aye, no condition more severe
Could be than this appalling fear.
His eyes go wildly glancing round,
Hoping a loophole may be found
Whereby from durance to escape,
But nowhere does deliverance gape :
The cross-barred window's latticed shape,
Clear outlined on the chilly moon,
But mocks him nigh into a swoon ;
It seems so slender, though so strong,
It could not surely take him long
To break the thin impediment
When frenzy giant strength has lent -
Then in a moment would he be
In the outer world, at large and free,
Fierce purpose drives his terrors out,
He springs aloft with ringing shout

And clanking chains ; with furious clutch
He grasps the bars ; their rusty touch
Gives greater hope ; he strives to rend
Their iron clasp ; they will not bend ;
Though with a madman's force he shakes.
Not e'en one slender hindrance breaks ;
His blue lips foam ; the hot sweat pours
Adown his face ; with rage he roars ;
Breathes curses inarticulate,
Then fiercely rails upon his fate ;
And leaping down, raves to and fro,
Bereft of hope, stark mad with woe.
And long his furious mood prevails,
Until exhausted nature fails ;
Then, prostrate fallen upon the floor,
All sense is lost ; he knows no more.

Amid the dewy hours of morn,
While golden rays the world adorn,

And life goes sweetly, blithsomely,
I see a sadly ominous tree
Bear hideous fruit, which, swaying slow—
A human pendulum, to and fro,
Marking the slowly moving hours—
Tells of the fate that overpowers ;
The doom which Justice, stern and blind,
Wreaks on the slayer of his kind.

SLEEP.

When toil has wearied head or hand,

'Tis then, O Sleep, thou art my friend :

I yield me to thy influence bland,

And thou my waning strength dost mend.

When cares sit heavy on my heart,

When Sorrow's spectre doth appal,

'Tis thou, O Sleep, that dost impart

The balm that heals me of them all.

When life at last too weary grows,

By age and every ill distressed,

Death, which is sleep, shall give repose,

And e'en the weariest shall be blest.

MY HAUNT.

'Neath drooping elms whose shade is deep ;
Nigh limpid waters half-asleep ;
Where no molesting sound may come ;
Where insects drowsily do hum ;
Where breathes the breeze subdued and mild ;
And softly sing the warblers wild ;
There let my haunt and refuge be,
And thither let me often flee.

There on the velvet sward I'll lie,
Through leafy screens peer at the sky ;
And as the lazy fleeces pass
I'll dream upon my couch of grass :
From every strife and care aloof,
Shall tender fancy weave her woof ;
Till rapt and lulled my spirit feels,
And sleep my willing senses steals.

THE LONELY GRAVE.

One evening as the twilight fell,
And softly rang the vesper bell,
I sauntered from the village dell;
Till greenest fields around me spread
A clovered carpet to my tread,
And fragrance flew from leaf and blade
By zephyr's unseen fingers swayed;
While dewy freshness drove away
The memory of the sultry day.
Then through the silence dim and deep
I heard the sleepy nestlings peep;
And from the distant brooklet's flow
Uprose a murmuring sweet and low
That seemed to thrall the dreamy sense

And banish care and troublings thence ;
And so in mildly musing mood
I wandered on in solitude.

But soon my path with awe I found
Had led me nigh a lonely mound,
Where one was slumbering 'neath the ground ;
With not a stone at head nor feet
To break the loneliness complete.
Nor on that lowly pyramid,
Amid the rank-grown herbage hid,
Rose there a bush with blooming dower,
Nor sprang to sight one modest flower ;
The narrow and upbuilt space
Was mantled deep in emerald grass,
And dark its melancholy hue
Through gathering night fell on the view.
Then much I marvelled who might lie
Thus lonely 'neath the darkening sky ;

Unguarded from the general field
Where mowers soon their scythes would wield ;
Within this spot where man and brute
Could trespass with a lawless foot,
And trample o'er the moldering head
Of the unmourned, forgotten dead.

Perchance, I thought, some beggar old,
Who had no friends—for lack of gold,
(Or crooked sire or withered dame,
Their pauper burial were the same);
Or else some miser, mean and base,
A scandal to the common race ;
Some murderer, with bloody hand,
Whose very name affrights the land ;
Perhaps a robber, bold and gay,
The terror of the travelled way,
Or who into their dwellings broke
To plunder men ere yet they woke :

Or here, beneath his fellows' ban,
May rest a sad self-murdered man ;
Mayhap some traitor — worst of all —
Intriguer of his country's fall ;
Or one who tempted wives away,
Or taught the innocent to stray ;
Or who shall say 'tis not some maid,
Reviled and scorned, by man betrayed.

I gave my fruitless musings o'er
And went more sadly than before ;
I left in their forsaken rest
The bones dishonored and unblest ;
Yet gave not up my curious quest
Until some soul the truth confessed.

No criminal or tarnished name
Was buried there, but lustrous fame !
The hands, now crumbled all to mold,

In days of wealth had scattered gold ;
The heart, now turned to ashes, loved
All men with love it daily proved ;
No creature e'er its lord could meet
But had its warm, fraternal beat ;
That busy brain ne'er failed to toil
To aid his brethren in the moil ;
But he who all his life had striven
To serve mankind and live for heaven —
The benefactor of his race —
Obtained a nameless burial place.
The fawners that on rich men live
To this man poor had nought to give—
Not e'en a plain memorial stone
To tell his virtues, flaunt their own ;
His deeds of love and goodness past,
No longer than his breath could last.
They found him dead one bitter day,
Houseless and homeless, and where he lay

They buried him with vulgar haste
Of those who have no time to waste ;
Nor, lest it might their bright spades rust,
Let fall one tear above his dust.

A GHASTLY DREAM.

It was a ghastly dream, O true Horatio ;
I would not wish to have its like again
Amid the night's deep watches ; and, indeed,
I could not well endure it. Methinks I saw
A still, vast sea—so silent that the grave
Would be a Babel to it—and there sat
Upon this sea, whose waters never stirred
Nor made a sound, a little, moveless boat,
Of oars devoid, whose idle sails hung down,
Waiting for winds that nevermore should blow
Upon that endless waste ; and the hot sun

With lurid glare shone mercilessly down,
With rays sent plumb upon the bare, scorched
head

Of one sad, thirsty man, who lay and gasped
Within that craft as fishes gasp on land ;
Too feeble e'en to fan his fevered brow ;
His throat too parched and close to let the groans
Creep from his bursting breast ; his lips all black
As if with putrid stain ; his features wan
And worn to sharpest shapes ; his eyes bulged
forth

With horror of his fate, and his swollen tongue
Hung starkly from his mouth. Helpless, dying,
Without hope he lay, and dark shapes mocked
him,

Making his plagues far worse. I sought to see
Who such a wretch might be—when, lo ! 'twas I !
And I awoke in sweaty, trembling fear
From that appalling, dark and ominous dream.

TO THE SEA.

I stand upon thy brim,
Interminable sea,
And see thee stretching dim,
Sign of Eternity.
The skies above thee bend,
Unfathomable blue,
And with thy far edge blend
Where thou art grey of hue ;
And fleecy clouds cast shadows on thy breast,
Where sleep the waves in an untroubled rest :
And o'er thy surface run
Gold streakings from the sun,
And on thy shore,

With mellow roar,
Light ripples pour
White ridged with foam ;
And the peaceful dome
Echoes the water's musical notes,
Sweet as the strains from warblers' throats,
Soft as the tones of the trembling string
'Neath some fair maid's mild fingering.

Yet thou art treacherous, Sea ;
Though now thou slumb'rest still,
Soon shalt thou rise resistlessly,
In fury, fierce of will ;
Thou shalt be wild upborn
In the stern tempest's path,
Thy surge majestic borne
Shall beat the strand in wrath ;
And venturous barks that sailed thy glassy plain
Shall find their doom upon the raging main ;

Thy billows shall arise
To gulf their trembling prize,
With awful roar
Thy breakers hoar
Shall cover o'er
The wailing crew,
Too late that rue
Their trust in thee and vessels frail,
Which fore thy might relentless quail;
And thou, once smooth as meadows spread,
Shalt sepulchre the stifled dead.

SONG.

I wish I had the peace of old,
Before of life I'd made a test ;
When glittering metal all was gold,
And life's delights I took with zest.

There is no grain of recompense
In knowing more, enjoying less !
We learn, we leave a darkness dense,
But, seeing clear, more care confess.

Ah, hours of ease and careless dreams !—
As one who climbs a barren height
And sees rich meads whereon the beams
Obliquely cast a mellow light,

I back do turn my longing glance
On ye oases fair of time ;
The visions there my soul entrance,
Till I forget awhile to climb.

Too soon the cloud, or gathered night,
Or need to move, doth shut ye out ;
And ruder scenes possess the sight ;—
That life is real I may not doubt.

THE OLD MAPLE.

Broad and high its boughs were lifted,
Rustling in the playful air ;
Through its leaves the sunlight sifted
O'er the sward, and ever drifted
To and fro, and flickered there,
'Mid the shreds of moving shade
On the meadow's canvass drawn
By the restless hand of dawn,
And the even's fingers staid.

And beneath it maid and lover,
On the summer afternoon,
Scenting the sweet-smelling clover,
Talked their love and future over
Till the rising of the moon ;
Watched the orb of day go down
Bathing boughs in rosy flame,
Till the milder moonlight came
Silvering the leafy crown.

SORROW'S MOCKERY.

Buried 'neath the ghastly snow,
Many weary years ago,
Still I know thy lonely bed
By its arching drift o'erhead,
Which the swaying, sighing pine
Sweeps in rhythmical incline,
With its coney besom hung
As of wintry yore it swung.

And I halt beside thy mound,
Vainly listening for the sound
Of thy once enrapturing voice,
Bidding me again rejoice
'Mid the poignance of my woe;
But I hear the drifting snow
And the crunching of the tree
Answering in mockery.

WE WATCHED THE COWS A-GRAZING.

Once hotly in the cloudless sky
The summer sun was blazing,
While, seated 'neath a branching elm,
We watched the cows a-grazing.
For black-nosed Bell and white-foot Nell
And Sue of crumpled horn,
Upon the clover of the mead,
All dewy from the morn,
With eager appetite might feed,
But must not nip the corn.

Oh, soft and pleasant was the sound
Of rustling boughs above,
The dreamy rapture of the land
Attuned the heart to love.

While black-nosed Bell and white-foot Nell
And Sue of crumpled horn,
Upon the clover of the mead,
Quite dewy from the morn,
With dainty appetite did feed,
Yet shunned the standing corn.

But when the heart is over-full,
Lips aye must lisp their tale,
So we with tender speech of love
The moments did regale.

While black-nosed Bell and white-foot Nell
And Sue of crumpled horn,
Upon the clover of the mead,
Still dewy from the morn,
With fickle appetite did feed,
And eyed the tempting corn.

Then on our simple, silly souls
A sweet oblivion fell,

And trust and duty were forgot
In love's enchanting spell.
Then black-nosed Bell and white-foot Nell
And Sue of crumpled horn,
Forsook the clover of the mead,
Yet dewy from the morn,
On sweeter, stolen food did feed,
And munched the luscious corn.

Thus once in summer long ago,
While the sun was fiercely blazing,
Beneath the branches of the elm
We watched the cows a-grazing.
But black-nosed Bell and white-foot Nell
And Sue of crumpled horn
No longer grazed the clovered mead,
All dewless since the morn,
But, of their careless watchers freed,
Despoiled the precious corn.

THE DYING MINER.

Upon the mountain side he lies
Even at his latest gasp ;
The world grows fainter to his eyes,
The gold slips from his clasp.

Around, the wild and rocky peaks
Stand silent near the sky ;
His weak and wandering vision seeks
Some human form to spy.

Far from the homes and haunts of men
His eager feet had plied ;
He braved the grizzly in his den,
The red man's rage defied.

He sought on hill, in vale and glen
To wrest earth's golden store,
He gathered countless wealth, and then
He sank to rise no more.

When friends are far and heart doth fail,
When death is closing o'er,
Not all the riches can avail
Which princely coffers pour.

His filmy orbs can scarcely view
The mountains' towering height ;
Fast turns to black heaven's cloudless blue,
And all things 'scape his sight.

All sightless, dying, hopeless, lone,
Thus ends his sateless greed ;
Forsaken 'mid the desert, prone,
With none to soothe his need.

He dimly dreams of days gone by,
When chary fortune gave
Hard toil and want, yet love was nigh
To cheer him and to save.

He knows that in one village home,
A thousand leagues away,
Was his ere he began to roam,
Will beat for him always,

One loving heart so true and fond,
'Twould yield its life for him,
Nor ever through the great beyond
His image there grow dim.

Oh, had one drop of sweet content
But tinged the cup of life,
Their souls had now in bliss been blent—
A happy man and wife.

But he despised a drudging fate,
Contemned his hands of horn;
He yearned to rise to richer state,
And viewed his rags with scorn.

With warm and eager hope he went
To rudest scenes afar;
The glorious tide of youth he spent
In lucre's sordid war.

Swift crept his manhood's sturdy prime,
He would not brook defeat,
But strove amain, while hurrying time
Went by each year more fleet.

His raven hair grew streaked with gray,
His bronzed face grew seamed
With scars and wrinkles, and the ray
Of his bright eye was dimmed.

In vain all earnestly he toiled,
The prize still fled his hand,
Still fickle fortune lured and foiled
And wrecked him on her strand.

Long since had heart and hope been lost,
Sweet memories, too, grew faint ;
Ah, wealth must come at bitter cost,
Nor hastens at our plaint.

Yet still he roved and sought as one
By haunting dreams pursued ;
Where'er his wayward path did run
He felt his hope renewed.

Ended at last in rich reward
His long and lonely quest ;
Earth's treasures oped ; but, ah ! ill-starred
Too late his wish was blest.

Now, midst the solemn wilderness,

He lays him down to die.

Devoid of soothing love's caress,

Unwept by any eye.

His misery's brief; a tender thought

From out the olden time

Within his soul deep peace has wrought,

Unmarred by worldly grime.

And 'mid that gentle ecstasy

The broken spirit's fled

From all its earthly agony,

And the baffled miner's dead.

Beneath the heavens the bleaching bones,

With useless gold anigh,

A moral tell, in louder tones

Than any preacher's cry.

APPLE BLOSSOMS.

In snowy fragrance on the boughs they cluster,
Fair apple blossoms of the teeming Spring,
Fruit's promises, all honey-laden,
At whose o'erbrimming goblets sips the bee
To surfeit, ere he wings his lagging way
Undeviating to his hive; and in whose depths
The humming bird, of flashing, burnished plume,
Poised in the sun, on ever-whirring wings,
Dives his long bill, keen taster of the sweets:
While the wandering and impatient wind
Ravishes their petals, and, with wanton hand,
Strews the white flakelets on the dark green grass,
Thence blowing odorous over field and lawn.

UNSATISFIED.

In the warm, cheery days of my youth
I sought for the blessings of earth,
And deemed I had found them in truth
In the chambers of revel and mirth.

These palled and I thought that in wealth
’Twere better for solace to trust ;
But avarice, working by stealth,
The gold of my nature did rust.

I aimed for the laurels of fame,
And fate did my strivings endow :
But a blot fell black on my name,
And the wreath withered swift on my brow.

I grasped for the learning of time
In the tomes of the ages confined,
Yet found howsoe'er I might climb,
Truth still soared too high for the mind.

When love strove my soul to allure,
I was charmed for a space with its wiles ;
But falseness my folly did cure,
And love now no longer beguiles.

Thus found I the blessings of earth
Illusive as dreams of the night,
Naught lasting in beauty or worth,
Naught giving a solid delight.

So then from these shadows I turn,
And cease from the resolute quest ;
Yet ever my being shall yearn
For the good that shall make it blest.

UNANSWERED.

Oh, why should the strength of mortals
In a moment pass away,
Like a brittle reed that's broken,
Or a shattered vase of clay ?

And why should pleasure be transient,
Like dews of dawn on the grass,
Or shadows of summer fleeces
That swift o'er the meadows pass ?

Or why should love e'er be fickle
And the tender heart grow cold
That burned with divinest ardor
In the rapturous time of old ?

Say why should riches be fleeting,

Like the fast, unstable stream

Whose waters beside our pathway

But an instant glide and gleam?

And why should the intellect weary

Of its learning broad and deep;

Why sickens it of the harvest

Thought's active sickles reap?

Or why should the fancy falter

When it soars to noblest things,

Like the dove that drooping, baffled,

Forevermore folds her wings?

And why should virtue e'er dally

With the sin the spirit scorns,

And change for a tattered mantle

The raiment that life adorns?

Or why should the pearl of honor
In the marts be cheaply sold,
And conscience lightly be bartered
For a tarnished gift of gold ?

Ah, why should the laurel wither
On the imperial brow of fame,
And noblest lives be blighted
By the Upas breath of shame ?

MY DAUGHTER.

Peerless amid girls,
Little daughter mine,
With soft eyes that shine
Like pure molten pearls ;
And a smile that lights thy face
With a sweet, cherubic grace ;
And musically prattling speech
Like tuneful ripples on the beach :
With a dainty-outlined shape
Angel gauze alone should drape ;
Fairy features, hands whose mould
Ne'er were vied by art of old ;
Feet as fair as sprays of fern
When the leaves of autumn turn ;—
All these are thine infant charms,
Which may heaven guard well from harms ;
Until thy growing soul these features shall
pervade
With lasting beauty spiritual, Oh, thou little maid

UPON THE SEA.

The waves are dancing blithely,
The wind is blowing free,
My bark tugs at its mooring
As if 'twould loosened be ;
E'en like a fettered creature,
It longs to glide away,
Once more to taste of freedom,
Once more to wildly play ;
Upon the ocean's bosom
To curvet and to roam,
And cleave with living pleasure
The waters flecked with foam.

Lo ! now the keel is sliding
 Along the grating sand ;
Ye cannot keep the sea-bird
 Imprisoned on the land.
And now she's bravely floating
 As buoyant as a fowl
That rides upon the sea-crest
 When wrathful tempests howl ;
And like the wings of eagles,
 Her snowy sails expand,
And like a dart she's speeding
 Far from the arid strand.

The distant shore is fading,
 Its murmurings are low ;
The ocean's mighty vistas
 Upon my vision grow ;
The swelling surge is swirling
 Around the rushing keel,

And drunken with her gladness

My merry bark doth reel ;

The spray is leaping madly,

It vaults above the mast,

And ere it falls in showers

My bounding bark is past.

Out, out into the ocean,

My vessel bears me on,

Till every glimpse and glimmer

Of hated earth is gone ;

Until the salty breezes

Revive my powers faint,

And from my rusted spirit

Is swept the worldly taint.

Oh, ne'er a fate so dismal

While yet I live be mine,

As not to skim with rapture

The broad and bluey brine.

THE DIRGE OF RED ROBIN.

Murmur a dirge for Robin,

Red Robin lying dead

On the bier of the meadow,

With a daisy at his head.

For scarce a month of summer

Poor Robin tuned his flute,

And sweetly piped his rapture,

Yet now he's stark and mute.

Aloft the crow is flying

And hoarsely sounds his tune ;

The swallow's restless pinion

Fans all the realm of June ;

The bobolink is trilling
His measures on the spray,
The yellow bird clear-voicing
Sings all the golden day ;

The humming bird is poising
Beside the blossom's cup,
Bee and butterfly disputing
The pleasure of its sup ;

And every grove is ringing
With careless warblers' song :
But Robin has no mourner
In all the happy throng.

Why are the birds all joyous,
When, dearer than them all,
Loved Robin 's 'neath the daisy
Asleep beyond recall ?

Oh, sadly chant for Robin,
And mourn his mellow flute ;
The fields have need of music
Now he is stark and mute.

THE UNLIFTED VEIL.

From all these human lives
Could we but lift the veil,
And know how each one strives
In earth's o'er-crowded hives,
Would not our spirits quail ?

'Neath fair appearance' mask
A Oft dwells an anxious pain :
Who seem in bliss to bask,
Too proud man's help to ask,
By hidden grief are slain.

YE THOUGHTS OF MAN.

BY YE BARD OF ELD.

A man his thoughts, what mote there be
Than these a fitter compaignie ?
Ne better comrades could one see.

For thoughts be frisky, thoughts be still,
Even as a man his mind hath will,
And vacant space they aye do fill.

When other friends would trouble thee
With rant and rout and revelry,
There's lazy cheer in reverie.

Give thoughts full welcome, ye who find
That folk displease how'er so kind,
And ye'll have pleasantness of mind.

“HOW CANST THOU BE WRETCHED ?”

How canst thou be wretched when Nature thus
smiling,

In new-kindled life with her sunshine and green,
And new tones of gladness, is ever beguiling
Thy heart from its sorrow, dejection and spleen ?

Behold the broad beauty of levels and mountains,
Steeped in the glory shed down from the sky :
Hark ! the sweet murmurs of earth's flashing
fountains,

The silver-voiced birds and the breeze flitting by.

All speak of joy unbounded and lasting ;
Taste of the universe' pleasure, 'tis thine ;
Why at God's banquet of bliss art thou fasting ;
'Tis thine own loathly spirit that maketh thee
pine.

Up ! be thou cheerful, 'tis Nature that bids thee—
Nature that utters a mandate divine ;
List to her solace, of anguish she'll rid thee,
And happiness' tendrils around thee shall twine.

Oh, 'tis the heart too often that seeketh
To fashion its woes from the mist of its dreams,
And make of the breast a dim dungeon that
reeketh,
When the world is most bright in blissfulness'
beams.

THE COMING STORM.

The tread of the sea on the edge of the shore,
A pale, broken flash and a far-echoed roar,
And the thick, inky masses gathering o'er—

The threat of the storm,

A gloom, not of night, pervading the air,
The wind's fitful blasts, and motionless there
In the height of the heaven the eagle at rest,
Daring the beat of the storm on his crest,

Mist-mantled his form.

Remote, reefed sails on the dark, purple main,
Drowned in the grey, misty march of the rain—

The storm host's sweep,

Whose fast-falling feet now dimly emerge
From the far-away line of the water's verge,
Beating flat down the white caps of the surge
And hiding the deep.

DECORATION DAY.

O stars and stripes, earth's fairest banner, wave
To-day more proudly still thy graceful folds
Above each green and decorated grave,
That in its depths a moldering hero holds.

To each low mound let grateful spirits bring
Bright floral gifts as to a sacred shrine ;
With lavish hands symbolic blossoms fling,
Fair, fresh and sweet their fragrant memory's
sign.

When treason drew against the nation's life
A venomed blade, at menaced freedom's cry
These fearless sprang amid the deadly strife,
With patriot zeal to battle and to die.

They saved the land, they set the bondaged free ;

This mighty realm no more shall traitors sever ;

Here shall the throne of lustrous freedom be,

Revered and firm, forever and forever.

All honors pay to those who slumber here,

Scant yet were all to meet their glorious need ;

Their fame shall thrive to fond remembrance dear,

Till hearts shall cease for truth and right to
bleed.

SPRING.

The winter's spell dissolving,
Earth's icy fetters break ;
Once more the waters glisten
On rill and river and lake.

Once more the wild flowers venture
To swing their fragile bells
Beneath the naked branches
Where budding life now swells.

Once more the emerald carpet
Is spread on every field,
And in the visible verdure
Creative life's revealed.

The winds more mildly blowing
Replace hoar winter's breath,
And warmer sunshine falling
Dispels earth's sleep of death.

WORSE THAN POVERTY.

Oh, cold are the winds of Winter
 When Poverty's cloak is torn.
 And fuel and food are lacking
 To the body old and worn :
 When each furious gust
 Blows the snow like dust
 Through the crannies of hovel and hut.
 And the keen-stinging air
 With famine doth pair,
 And misery and care
 Like beggarly phantoms strut.

But I'll tell thee a worse,
A more terrible curse
Than to starve and to freeze and to ache ;
'Tis when there's an end
In the world of a friend
To do and to dare for thy sake ;
Then well may thy breast
Be pierced and oppressed,
And thy spirit be palsied and quake.



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